

April 2, 1981

LB 125

months of a woman's pregnancy, the woman was at liberty to make whatever decision she wanted to make with respect to her own anatomy. In the next three months of the woman's pregnancy, the woman had a similar liberty. However, the state itself had the liberty to be able to regulate health care because the state would be rightfully concerned about the woman's physical well being. Only in the last three months of the woman's pregnancy when that fetus or unborn child, depending the value judgment that you bring to this issue, is a viable being, is more nearly recognized by all of us as a human, as a human, is in the process of life in being. During the last three months, then the state may fully, totally and completely regulate that area, and it is at that point in time when under our Constitution rights really do attach, rights really do attach to that unborn child, or to that fetus. I agree with that point of view. I think that is a responsible point of view. I have read the decision several times. I think the decision is a relatively well articulated decision, and I would not disagree with that point of view. I approach this subject too with what I hope to be an appropriate reverence of life. I think that is one of the hallmarks of western civilization, is a reverence for life, and the life that I feel strongly about is virtually all life, including, including the fetus at one month, or two months, or three months...

SPEAKER MARVEL PRESIDING

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: ...but by the same token, I balance against that the situation in which the woman has found herself. She may have been raped, a step parent, brother or sibling may have had intercourse with her. She may be thirteen years old. She has to face a fairly significant...that's a trite expression, she has to face a monumental decision concerning herself. Our churches, our agencies, our organizations encourage her to carry that fetus to term and to give a live birth. Our values encourage that. On the other hand, her decision is a personal one to make. It seems to me that LB 125 continues to crowd her, continues to show in a sense disrespect for her decision making and her life, that I think LB 125 is the kind of legislation for all the reasons that have been articulated against it, both today and in preceding debates, genuinely ought to be killed. I would urge the bill be returned to Select File for the specific amendment striking the enacting clause.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Okay, the motion is to return the bill